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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/905,338	07/13/2001	Michael I. Watkins	02558B-059411US	6976

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EXAMINER

STUCKER, JEFFREY J

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1648

DATE MAILED: 07/23/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Applicati n N .

09/905,338

Applicant(s)

WATKINS ET AL.

Examiner

Jeffrey Stucker

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 April 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 21-29 and 50-58 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21-29 and 50-58 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 9.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office Action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 4/23/03 has been entered. Claims 21-29 and 50-58 are pending and rejected.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

Claims 21-23, 26, 27, 29, and 54-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Walt et al. (US 6,023,540).

The instant invention is directed to a composition comprising microparticles that comprise different subpopulations of discrete size particles that can measure different analytes in the same assay. Various size ranges are claimed as well as a specific surface chemistry.

The patent specification states that microspheres are commercially available in a range of sizes (which overlap the claimed sizes) with a number of characteristics including sizes and surface chemistries. The surface can include carboxylate groups. See Table I. The microspheres can also be paramagnetic as disclosed in column 5, line 36. The particles can be used for immunoassays. Immuno-based microsphere sensors are disclosed in the last paragraph of column 9, column 15, lines 17-40, and Figures 10A and 10B. Throughout the specification of the patent, there are numerous disclosures of using multiple parameters in order to analyze multiple target analytes in a sample. A specific parameter is different sizes of microspheres. See column 13, lines 33-45. There is no teaching of using flow cytometry but that is irrelevant as the claimed invention is directed to a composition. An embodiment of the patented invention is

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multiple populations of particles on the end of a fiber optic assay device which reads on the instantly claimed composition. The language "suitable for use in a multiplex assay procedure that includes the use of flow cytometry" is a recitation of the intended use of the claimed microparticles and does not result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. The claimed microparticles are capable of use in flow cytometry, thereby meeting the claims. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). Thus, the instant invention is anticipated by Walt et al. (US 6,023,540).

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103, the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of potential 35 U.S.C. § 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claims 21-29 and 50-58 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Walt et al. (US 6,023,540) in view of Coulter (GB 1 561 042).

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The instant invention is further limited as to the particular ratio of polymer to magnetically reactive substance.

Coulter teaches distinct populations of microparticles coupled to antigens or antibodies which allows a sample to be analyzed by multiple parameters. The reference discloses routine methods to use known polymers to produce various distinguishable sizes of microparticles suitable for assays. The primary reference teaches that methods of producing microparticles are known and routine but does not specifically teach ratios of polymer to magnetically responsive material.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Walt et al. by routine microparticle production methods as disclosed in the Coulter reference to produce the different variations of particles disclosed generally in Walt et al. Therefore, the instant invention is obvious over Coulter (GB 1 561 042).

No claims are allowed.

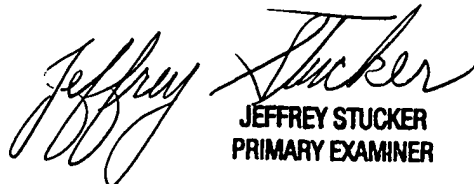
Papers related this application may be submitted to Group 1600 by facsimile transmission. Papers should be faxed to Group 1600 via the PTO Fax Center located in Crystal Mall 1. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notice published in the Official Gazette, 1096 OG (November 15, 1989).

The Group 1600 Fax numbers are: (703) 308-4242 and (703) 305-3014.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey Stucker whose telephone number is (703) 308-4237. The examiner can normally be reached Monday to Thursday from 7:00am to 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Housel, can be reached on (703) 308-4027.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Tech Center Customer Service representative whose telephone number is (703) 308-0198.


JEFFREY STUCKER
PRIMARY EXAMINER